THE MEDICAL MISSIONARY

"Come, let us adore . . ."

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A CATHOLIC MEDICAL COLLEGE is a most urgent necessity in India. His Excellency, Bishop Thomas of Bangalore, give a bird's eye view of present-day Catholic medical education in India—and the prospects for the future.

CHRISTMAS NIGHT—at Holy Family Hospital in Rawalpindi . . . . Rosie, the cheerful little student nurse, was on night duty and had to miss the Midnight Mass. But . . . . Sister Alma Julia tells the story in "Midnight Mass—Somewhere in India."

BACK TO INDIA!—Mother Dengel describes her return visit to India and our missions there—after a ten years' absence. You will not want to miss her vivid impressions of this changing country . . . .

MUD—AND MORE MUD—is the theme of Sister Ignatius Marie's "Tale of Mud." But in India mud is not to be despised —as you will see . . .

YOUR WILL . . . . .

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The Motherhouse and Novitiate are located in Fox Chase, Philadelphia, Pa. There is also a House of Studies in Brookland, Washington, D. C., and Houses of Postulate in England and Holland.

The main activities of the Society include the conducting of hospitals, dispensaries, maternity and child welfare centers, training schools for native nurses and midwives, and similar health works.

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Peace to men of good will . . .

Everything was very quiet that first Christmas night, very, very quiet. Yes, of course there were some earth sounds—a baby sheep bleating for its mother, perhaps; the oxen lowing; hooves thumping. But the shepherds were quiet—and they wondered—until the Angel came to tell them what it was all about—"Glory to God in the highest and on earth PEACE TO MEN OF GOODWILL."

That is Christmas—the Child Who is our Peace come down to men—to men of goodwill.

Only God could have thought of doing it that way—giving His Peace to men. We would have done—and do—far otherwise. We write of peace and talk about it, for days and months and years; we think up a hundred reasons for peace, a hundred ways to gain peace, a hundred plans to keep peace. Headlines and radios, platforms and soapboxes shout of peace. And yet, there is no peace.

But Peace did come down to earth to be with men, to dwell with men and remain with men that first Christmas night centuries ago. Peace came because Love came—as a little Child.

He slipped into the world silently, this helpless Baby Who could not even speak of peace. His coming was hardly marked. And yet everything was there—the peace, the happiness, all that men long for—in a tiny Babe, so pitifully small and helpless—but all powerful and almighty, Who was Love.

Christmas is God's invitation to all men—to love. The little Child, Who shows us in His baby weakness that love can do and bring and be all things, asks only for love and goodwill among men. He looks, not to talent, nor to work, nor color, nor wealth, nor poverty—but only to the hearts of men—to our love for Him and for His brothers and sisters—who are our brothers and sisters too— in Him. And in the light of Bethlehem this becomes very clear to us—that only in selfless love of God and man, a love without reserves, a stringless love, can there be found deep and real and lasting Peace.

MAY THE BABE OF BETHLEHEM GIVE TO US ALL THE GRACE OF HIS LOVE . . . WHICH IS OUR PEACE.

A CATHOLIC MEDICAL COLLEGE FOR INDIA

By The Most Rev. Thomas Pothacamury, D. D.
Bishop of Bangalore

Compared with the enormous output of energy, service and resources of the Protestant missions in India in the medical field, Catholics lag far behind. It was only towards the latter half of the last century that even Protestant agencies began to devote earnest attention to organized medical missionary enterprise. Their success has been phenomenal. They have established 300 hospitals, 600 dispensaries and 62 leprosy sanatoria. Approximately one-eighth of India's patients are treated in their hospitals. One-third of all the beds available for the treatment of tuberculosis are provided in Protestant sanatoria. Another remarkable thing about their effort is that they have trained 80 per cent of India's nurses.

In order to ensure the stability and efficiency of their work for the prevention of disease and the care of the sick and suffering, they have trained a large body of doctors and nurses for high posts of responsibility. During the last half-century, three medical schools were started in different provinces of India: Ludhiana, the Punjab in 1894 for women; Mirai, Bombay, in 1897, for men; and Vellore, South India in 1919 for women. These three institutions graduated over one thousand doctors and more than half of them are working in Protestant mission hospitals and dispensaries.

Their greatest achievement is the raising of the Vellore medical school to the status of a first rate college. The Christian Medical Association of India, and the National Christian Council, representing various Protestant denominations, had worked in consultation in planning a medical college of university grade. Vellore was selected as the foundation for the building of an all-India union co-educational medical college. It had already attained remarkable success under the inspiring personality of an American woman doctor, Ida Scudder, and had an excellent hospital and solid buildings. The Madras University considered the application favorable. Provisional affiliation was granted in January, 1946, and in December, 1947 the Vellore medical students will sit for their examination for the M.B.B.S. degree. During the past two years the staff has been more than doubled. A highly qualified Indian woman doctor has been chosen as principal of the college and on the staff are men and women of India, Australia, Britain, Canada, Ireland and the United States. The cooperation of thirty-nine Mission Boards representing Protestant churches in India, North America, Britain, Australia and Denmark has made the Vellore Christian Medical College the grand success it is.

Catholic Medical Pioneers

Catholic effort in the medical field of the apostolate is of comparatively recent date. We have only about 50 hospitals and 350 dispensaries. Most of these are conducted by religious Sisters. They are generally small, understaffed and ill-equipped. Few of them have Catholic doctors. The importance and urgency of Catholic medical missionary work was emphasized four decades ago by Dr. Agnes McLaren, a Scotch convert, who founded the Catholic Hospital at Rawalpindi. Dr. Margaret Lamont, another Scotch convert whom I knew personally, travelled through various parts of India and wrote enthusiastically about the need of developing medical work. Dr. Anna Dengel also worked in Rawalpindi, visited different provinces of India and later founded the Medical Mission Sisters in Philadelphia for a rapid expansion of this Christian work of mercy. Considerable interest has thus been aroused in recent times in medical work, which is a natural and vital outlet of the spirit of Christ, and which the Church always undertook in some form or another from the earliest times.

A Most Urgent Need

Our work in this direction can never make considerable headway without a steady supply of Catholic doctors and nurses, equipped with the knowledge which the best modern sci-

ence can give and imbued with the virtues and qualities of which Catholicism is the spiritual power house. A Catholic Medical College for India is, therefore, an urgent necessity. Vast schemes are being projected by the various provincial governments for the training of a larger number of medical men and women. There are at present only 42,000 doctors and some 8,000 nurses in India. There is only one doctor for every 10,000 persons as against one for every 2,000 persons or less in the United States and Great Britain. There are many Catholic boys and girls who would like to take up the medical profession, but it is not easy for them to secure admission into the Government colleges. Admission is on a communal ratio, the quota for each community, as Hindus, Muslims and Christians, being fixed according to their numerical strength. As the Catholics are relatively small in number, they cannot secure many seats. Furthermore, secular colleges furnish no spiritual background. Their influence and atmosphere are at variance with Catholic principles, for modern medical science is utterly pagan and materialistic in outlook. Very few congregations of Sisters will think of sending their members to Government colleges for medical studies. And yet, as most hospitals are under the management of Sisters, considerations of economy, efficiency and continuity render it imperative that some Sisters should be trained as doctors and nurses to staff their hospitals.

The Prospects . . .

A Catholic Hospital Association was started in Guntur in July 1943 and at its conventions held in Bangalore in April 1944 and in Hyderabad in November 1944, the question of a Catholic Medical College was seriously taken up. I presided over both these conventions and was commissioned to write to the Hierarchy and secure their support for the scheme. Every one of the bishops and other ecclesiastical heads of the fifty-six jurisdictional units of India warmly welcomed the proposal. One bishop wrote: "There is an urgent need for promoting medical service by way of giving wider expression and efficiency to the Church's universal apostolate." Another said: "In my experience, many Hindus as such appreciate Christianity only in the measure in which it brings relief to the suffering members of their community and consequently they are inclined to show greater esteem for our separated brethren, because they have done more hitherto in that department than the various heads of the Catholic Church." The head of another diocese declared: "I consider that a college of this kind is more essential, especially as there seems to be evidence of considerable increase in the interest shown by provincial governments in this work." A fourth bishop wrote: "A Catholic Medical College is one of the pressing needs of India." Still another: "We wholeheartedly approve of this excellent scheme, which will most certainly be welcomed by every Catholic authority and organization; the priests and religious should be personally interested to make it a success."

I read a paper on the subject of a Catholic Medical College at a meeting of the Standing Committee of the recently formed Catholic Bishops' Conference held in Bangalore in October, 1945. The proposal was approved and a committee appointed to study the question further and present a definite scheme. The committee met in Mylapore and discussed various aspects of the proposal. The choice of a suitable locality was also raised, but no decision was taken, for there are so many conflicting viewpoints chiefly regarding the selection of a center in a country of such immense distances as India. The American Jesuits in Patna are considering the establishment of a college in Patna with the encouragement and financial support of the Government. The Society of Jesus conducts five such colleges in America and its members are certainly in the most advantageous position to undertake this most important work in India.

The question of a Catholoic Medical College is mainly a financial one. It will no doubt come into existence the moment the required funds are raised. The scheme will cost at least one million dollars spread over a few years.

The need for such an institution is realized on all sides. We can never expand our medical work without a constant supply of duly qualified Catholic doctors and nurses. And in order to train such a body in accordance with principles sacred to us, a Catholic Medical College is an imperative necessity.

The missioner's Hope is encompassed with a triangular rampart:

on one side the Will of God that the Kingdom be made safe;

on another the perseverance of the apostle in joy and agony alike;

on the third the faithful self-sacrifice of the friends at home.

A breach, however slight, at any point . . . and all security of Hope is gone.

—T. Gaven Duffy

Midnight Mass -- Somewhere in India

By Sister M. Alma Julia, S.C.M.M.

"*Jalal Khudawand da ho*—Glory be to God on High . . . " Rosie stopped her song as she came up to the chart desk. "Merry Christmas, Sister Stephanie! Sister, it is Christmas Eve and I'm on night duty and shall miss Midnight Mass." Thus Rosie cheerfully listed her complaints.

Although Sister Stephanie had her pen poised over a chart, she was not thinking of what was on the sheet before her. Her thoughts went back to a kitchen where people would be baking *struessel kuchen* and *Christstollen.*

"Never mind, Rosie," she said. "I'm not in the choir so you and I will mind the hospital. Perhaps, if nothing happens, we can take turns peeking into the church."

"Merry Christmas, Sister," Rosie sang out, and went racing up the steps to the nursery.

Rosie, with her crisp white uniform contrasting with her black hair and eyes and brown skin, is not the prettiest girl in the training school, but she is the most cheerful.

"Merry Christmas!" Rosie sang out, as she handed each little Hindu and Mussalman to its respective mother. Faces brightened as she approached, partly on account of the little bundles that were placed in their arms; partly through the contagion of the little nurse's cheerfulness.

Then Rosie skipped down stairs again where Sister Stephanie was charting the evening temperatures.

"No baby case in, Sister?"

"I should hope not. With everyone off to Mass and the breakfast and presents afterwards, it will be two o'clock before they will be finished."

"Oh, but Sister, we ought to have a Christmas baby. I'm praying for a Christmas baby. It must be a boy. Then I don't care if I do miss Midnight Mass."

* * * *

Mohammed Ali thought his troubles were more than he could bear.

"Oh, woe is me! What shall I do!" For the past six months he had plowed and sowed and finally reaped the five acres he rented from Sher Khan. After the money lender was paid for the last season's seed and Sher Khan got his half of the wheat, and the seed was put aside for the next sowing—what did he have left? Not enough to keep his family in bread until the next harvest, and Miriam needed milk and eggs and little two-year-old Gulab was getting thinner every day for want of proper food.

And now Miriam's time had come again, and the old woman of the village who took care of such things had just finished telling him she would have nothing to do with the case.

"Her bones have softened," the old lady said. "I'm afraid there is going to be trouble and the baby will not live. If you could take her to the city, they may do something, but you had better hurry."

Mohammed Ali consulted with the headman of the village who had been to the city and could advise him. Finally he hitched his bullocks to the heavy, home-made bullock cart, piled what warm clothes his one-room mud hut afforded on top of some straw in the bottom of the cart, and helped Miriam into it. Little Gulab was tucked in beside her mother and a few supplies were added for the trip.

It took longer than they expected. Miriam was sore and tired from the jolting of the cart. They stopped twice and cooked their wheat bread while the bullocks rested. Mohammed Ali had hoped to see his cousin who lived in the city, but it was already dark when they entered the outskirts of Rawalpindi. So he went directly to Holy Family Hospital which was on the main street and easy to find.

* * * *

"It must be almost time for the singers to begin the 'Silent Night'," thought Rosie. There was no clock upstairs so Rosie skipped down the steps again. Sure enough, it was almost eleven-thirty.

She stopped a moment and looked at the home-made garlands over the door and the tiny crib on top of the chart desk. Just then Sister Stephanie came out of Ward Six.

"Merry Christmas, Sister! Anything doing? Sister, I think I hear the carolers." . . . She rushed to the front door and listened. With the noise of a bullock cart going by, it was hard to hear. What! Was the bullock cart stopping? With a rush Rosie was out of the door and hurrying towards the gate.

Leaving Holy Family Hospital in Rawalpindi

"Chaukidar!" she called to the watchman, who was sleeping as usual, "Wake up, someone is at the gate!"

Before Mohammed Ali had climbed off the cart and knocked at the gate it was thrown wide open and an old man, the chaukidar, began to lead the bullocks into the courtyard.

At the same moment the church bells rang out the first call for Midnight Mass. Eleven-thirty! Ding-dong! Mass begins at twelve. Ding-dong!

A nurse in dazzling white was hurrying to the back of the bullock cart. Sister Stephanie was just a few yards behind.

"Oh, Sister! The Holy Family has arrived! A baby case! I'll go for the wheel chair right away." Rosie danced back into the hospital and a few seconds later was back with the wheel chair. Another minute and Miriam was on the operating room table.

* * * *

For the next hour Rosie was in her glory.

After a while she went back to the gate where she found Mohammed Ali trying to soothe a weeping Gulab. He had unhitched the bullocks and tied them to the neem tree where they were now munching the sweet grass that grew there.

"Sister said to tell you that they have to operate right away. All right?"

"As you say, Miss Sahib."

"And, St. Joseph, you had better let me put that child to bed." Rosie picked up the tiny girl and swung her to her hip, Punjabi fashion.

"As you say, Miss Sahib. My name is Mohammed Ali and the little one's name is Gulab." (Gulab means "Rose" in Punjabi.)

Mohammed Ali felt so relieved that this nurse was one of his own people and spoke his own language. She did not seem to understand his name, though.

"Why that's my own name," exclaimed Rosie. "Listen, St. Joseph, you wait here. I'll be back."

Back on the chukidar's bench, Mohammed Ali was still trying to figure things out. It was all very puzzling, just as if they were expected. Why that little Indian nurse even knew his wife's name, calling her Miriam and asking details just as if she had met her before. Of course, Miriam was a common enough Mussulman name. But even the European Sister acted as if they were expected.

Ah, here was the little nurse again.

"St. Joseph, you come with me now. Gulab is sleeping and Miriam is under the anesthetic, but Sister said you had better be near in case we need you in a hurry. Sit here while I go to see if there is any news."

Back in the operating room Sister Margaret Mary said, "Good. It's a boy. Here, Rosie, keep him well covered with the blanket going through the halls. Take him to the nursery and just oil him and wrap him up well again and put him into the crib. Then hurry back."

"How's the mother, Sister?"

"All right so far. Better tell her husband when you have time."

Now Rosie was in seventh heaven. Carefully she closed the door behind her and hurried over to the corner where Mohammed Ali was waiting.

"Look, St. Joseph! A fine baby boy!"

"My name is Mohammed Ali," he murmured hopelessly. Then his face lit up at the sight of his little son.

"Now you wait here until I come back and I'll let you know how things are."

Softly Rosie sang the Punjabi Christmas carol as she started down the hall to the stairs, "Behold a little boy is born tonight, Miriam is his sweet mother."

"Very puzzling," thought Mohammed Ali.

Then the operating room door opened and Miriam was wheeled into a nearby ward. Rosie rushed down the stairs again just as the Sisters and nurses were going off.

"Rosie, explain to the man that he can go

"And there were shepherds . . . " Indian shepherds keeping watch over their flocks

now. Miriam is all right. Tell him to come back in the morning after eight o'clock."

A minute later Rosie was back with a cup of hot coffee and a bun.

"Here, St. Joseph. Eat this quickly and then Sister said you can go. You are sleeping out in the bullock cart tonight near chaukidar? Fine, then I can call you if you are needed. But I am sure everything will be all right. The baby weighs eight pounds. I weighed him upstairs."

Getting settled in the bullock cart, Mohammed Ali listened as some of the school children sang as they passed by on their way home from the church. They were singing the same song in Punjabi that the nurse sang as she carried his son down the hall.

"Behold a little Boy is born tonight."

And two men went by singing, also in Punjabi,

"Glory be to God on high,
And peace to men of good will."

* * * *

Two weeks ago Mohammed Ali was the most worried man in the Punjab. Now Miriam was well and his son was flourishing and today he was taking her back to the village.

His cousin, Akbar, had introduced him to many people and they had told him many things.

"What, you didn't know that bullocks now sold for three hundred rupees each! And your animals are good and strong and still young."

"Why work Sher Khan's land for almost nothing? With half the money you get from the bullocks you can buy the land outright and sell your own wheat in the city markets."

"Get a good milch buffalo with some of the money. She can pull the bullock cart almost as well as the two bullocks. She can also pull the plow and at the same time she will furnish you with milk for all your needs."

"Get a good nanny goat with some of the money and a couple of hens."

Yes, Mohammed Ali had learned many things these past two weeks.

"Rosie! What are you doing here? You should be in bed by now."

"Yes, Sister, I am going this minute, but I have to see the Holy Family off. They can't understand Sister Jude's Punjabi and she asked me to explain about feeding the baby and Miriam's medicine. Just a minute."

And there was Rosie coming out with the baby on one arm and guiding Miriam's slow steps. The bullock cart was there in the courtyard, but lo! a buffalo was hitched to it instead of two bullocks. A nanny goat was tied to the driver's seat, while two hens in a homemade wicker basket were protesting close quarters.

"Rosie!" Sister Jude said, "What is that baby doing with our best nursery frock on, and where did he get those red booties and cap?"

"Oh, Sister, Sister Margaret Mary said the Christmas baby could have this dress, and I knitted the booties and cap myself with the wool the Mem Sahib gave me."

"And did you dress up that other child in these clothes? She had nothing but rags on

every time I saw her here."

"No, Sister. Sister Bernadette did that. They are clothes the people give her in the Dispensary for poor children. Doesn't little Rosie look sweet?"

Mohammed Ali went to the office.

"The bill, Mem Sahib?" he asked Sister Jude.

"Rosie! Here, explain to the man that there is no bill. Sister Margaret Mary said they are poor village folks and we cannot charge for our Christmas baby."

Mohammed Ali wished he had the fluency of speech of his cousin that he might adequately thank these people, but they did not understand his language very well, anyway.

As they drove home Miriam said, "Now, *that* Rosie, just think, she is one of our own village girls and see what those Christians have made of her."

"A grand nurse," agreed Mohammed Ali, "though a little poor at remembering names." And then he hummed the lines he had heard so often around the hospital . . . "Jalal Khudawand da ho."

BACK TO INDIA

By Mother Anna Dengel, S.C.M.M., M.D.

To India at last. The visit was long overdue. Sister M. Stephen, Sister M. Augustine and I sailed on November 14th, 1945 on the SS. Santa Paula, a south American luxury liner, plying the seas pro tem between New York and Karachi to bring home three thousand American soldiers in time for Christmas. This gave a hundred and sixty people, including ourselves, a chance to go to India in the record time of twenty days, stopping only three hours the whole way, at the gate of the East—Port Said.

The city looked the same except for some buildings that must have served for war purposes. The familiar boats with curio sellers appeared as usual. There were the same antics and ways of bargaining. They had many leather goods—lovely hassocks, patterned and decorated pocketbooks of Egyptian design, cigaret cases, and, of course, the inevitable Turkish delight. Two Arab policemen in a boat watched that only licensed sellers stayed. The others they drove off with many gestures and loud commands. Here, too, we had a picture that reminded us that we were at the threshold of change from mechanical to human energy. On the pier opposite was a boat which apparently stopped to coal. A steady line of coolies went up and down to carry the coal in bags on their shoulders from a freighter below. It looked like a procession of ants creeping up and down, to and fro in a steady stream as long as we were in port.

We had hoped to land in Karachi for the feast of St. Francis Xavier, but we made it only the next day, December fourth. It was bright and sunny, pleasantly warm. The panorama of the harbor was magnificent—the blue expanse of water, the mountains in the distance, the oyster rock, the lighthouse, and the buildings of the city approaching nearer and nearer till at last we set foot on India.

We did not feel strangers or homeless as we were welcomed to their hospital by the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, and by old friends to their homes. The Bishop, too, heard of our arrival and invited us to visit some of the Catholic institutions of Karachi which has a large and progressive population of Goans who are fervent Catholics. Among others we visited the maternity hospital where we met several Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Christ the King. We also met their Mother General, Mother Bridget, at one of their schools. She is on the City Council, I believe. It was beautiful to see this highly cultured woman with Crucifix and Franciscan cord, token of her religious profession, in the graceful Indian garb, a sari bordered with three stripes.

We had hoped to go right on to Lahore, but our stay in Karachi had to be prolonged for a few days for lack of transportation. Several thousand pilgrims had just returned from Mecca, and had to be taken care of first. But the few days' delay was a pleasant change before we began travelling once more on our way to the North.

The journey from Karachi to Rawalpindi is a

dusty one through long stretches of desert. Although the scenery is not interesting there is no monotony as the fellow travellers provide plenty of company and entertainment. Each one freely tells her story and asks many questions in return.

An elderly lady, when she heard that we were going to our hospital, gave us all the details of an operation she underwent in Bombay at the cost of 1200 rupees ($400) for the surgeon, and 700 rupees ($230) for the hospital. She told us about her daughter who had been married at sixteen. The doctor's fee in Karachi at the birth of her first child was 1,000 rupees. At that rate, I thought, birth control will surely make rapid headway among the well-to-do. This young daughter had lost her husband at twenty and is doomed to be one of the many young widows of India unless she is courageous enough to brave public opinion.

Later on a young Mohammedan woman covered with a burka entered. When the train was in motion she threw off her veil and was quite chatty, interspersing her conversation with some English words. She looked strong, but quite disheveled. She was dressed in a black blouse with green pajamas and head cover. By the way of apology she explained that during two and a half months of the Muharrum her particular sect was in mourning (for historic reasons too long to relate) and therefore wore only black and green garments and denied themselves in many ways— not wearing jewels, nor using flowers, lipstick, surma (eye shadow), pan, meat or sweets, and abstaining from marriage and all festivities. As she was alone an Indian woman asked her if she had children. She did, but explained that she had left them with relatives. The questioner could not understand a mother who did not take her children with her. This inherent motherly solicitude, characteristic of Indian women, no doubt explains the many baby passengers that always abound.

From time to time we looked out. Beyond the Sind desert we saw cotton fields. In some places the cotton was being picked and taken to ginning factories in bullock carts. The bright yellow mustard fields in bloom were a refreshing change and the sugar cane looked luscious. Near Multan we also saw orange groves.

As we approached nearer and nearer to Lahore our compartment filled up to the brim. The women who now boarded the train appeared better educated and spoke English. One young Mohammedan woman spoke it fluently. She was a college graduate and was married to a doctor. I asked her several questions about Mohammedanism—about the burka, its origin, etc. Her version was that it began in India after the Mogul invasion, when the Mohammedans had to mix with the Hindus. She told me it was being discarded now in many places, but that she had worn it all through her college years. I asked who decides whether the women should keep purdah or not. "Oh, the husband!" she said quickly.

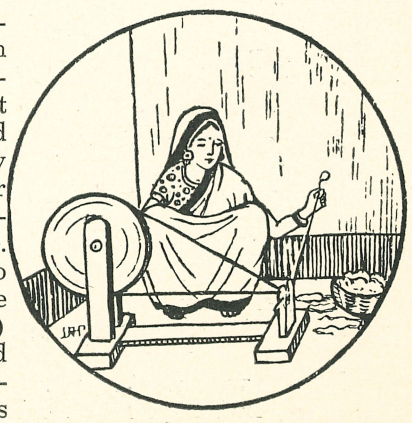
"But suppose the husband does not want it and the wife does?"

"Well, that would mean an unsuccessful marriage," was her reply.

When I asked about divorce she told me— "That too, is not so common." She explained how according to Moslem law the women are protected. At the time of the arrangement of the marriage a settlement of money is made which is to be given to the wife in case of divorce. A list of jewels, clothing, etc. is also drawn up and signed and is to be the property of the wife should there be a divorce. During the marriage ceremony itself both bride and bridegroom are asked their consent. I inquired if the bride ever refused. "It has happened," she said.

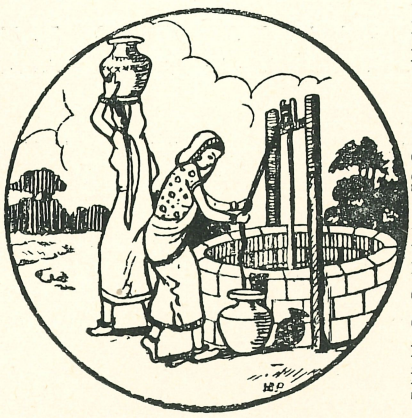
I also asked if the Mohammedans really prayed five times a day. The young woman answered—"When people get older they pray, but the young ones do not care much." About herself, she said— "When one is young one likes to enjoy things. When I am older I will pray."

This lady also had a small daughter with her—a very charming little girl, charming as only Indian children can be. In India the youngsters have very much freedom. Like many things in the East and West that are opposites, so it is with discipline. In the West children are disciplined in childhood and are given more and more freedom towards adolescence. In India it is the other way around—the discipline begins after childhood and becomes more strict during youth.



At a village station not far from Lahore a very attractive young Jat Sikh woman stepped in. She had a very matter of fact air about her and started knitting at once. (Twenty years ago this would have been unheard of.) By degrees we had an interesting conversation. She was

twenty-two years old and had her B. A. degree. She had taken physical culture in Madras and was teaching now at two colleges in Lahore. Her salary was 15 rupees per month ($42) in each place. At the present time she was working for her M. A. — but her ambition was to go to the United States to obtain a Ph.D. She could easily obtain a scholarship to an English university, she told me, but she had set her heart on America. When I asked about marriage she explained that a marriage had been arranged for her but that she absolutely refused. For the past year she had been pursued by match-making relatives. "It is very troublesome to evade them," she sighed. "But I want to do different things—perhaps start a women's college with two of my friends."



This young woman struck me as an example of the New India, braving public opinion and making a way for herself and for others. She symbolizes a hope—but a hope not without danger. Twenty years ago I did not meet any like her. Now there are a few. In twenty years more, we can be sure,, there will be very many.

It was noon when we finally arrived in Lahore, the parting of our ways. Sister Stephen and Sister Augustine were bound for Patna and I was going on to Rawalpindi. The scramble at the railway station was such that I could not leave my place and was obliged to let the sisters manage for themselves for the first time in India. They got along perfectly. The era of helpless women may not be extinct in Asia, but it certainly is for us from the West. And at last I was on my way to Rawalpindi—the cradle of our Society. More about it in our next issue . . .

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

The Christ-Child lay on Mary's lap,
His hair was like a light.
(O weary, weary were the world,
But here is all aright.)

The Christ-Child lay on Mary's breast,
His hair was like a star.
(O stern and winning are the kings,
But here the true hearts are.)

The Christ-Child lay on Mary's heart,
His hair was like a fire.
(O weary, weary is the world,
But here the world's desire.)

The Christ-Child stood at Mary's knee,
His hair was like a crown,
And all the stars looked up at Him,
And all the stars looked down.

—G. K. Chesterton

A TALE OF MUD

By Sister Ignatius Marie, S.C.M.M.

"Water, water everywhere," sang the Ancient Mariner—but if he had lived in India he would have had a different theme. For here there is mud—and more mud—everywhere. I do not mean the mud on the road now, thanks to the real monsoon downpour that is beating a deafening tattoo on our tin roof and turning the road into a quagmire. That mud does not matter much unless the shower catches you a long way from home. A few hours of sunshine will dry it up and leave the road in good shape.

It is the permanent, or semi-permanent mud, one finds in India. Ever since the world began probably no people have made as much use of mud as the Indians. It serves them in countless ways—as a cleansing agent, as a healer, and even as building material.

That an industrious housewife might use sand as an abrasive for cleaning pots and pans does not seem unusual, but in India she does not look for the sand but just picks up whatever happens to be at hand—or rather, at her feet. If her dishes are of good quality brass, she may toss the dirt around in her hands a few times to shake out the small pebbles. Inside and out, pots, pans, glasses and plates, all of which are of brass, are scoured with mud and rinsed several times. This takes place not only after a meal, but again before the meal as well. The same useful and readily obtainable earth also cleans the hands. I do not claim that it does away with that "dishpan look," but perhaps the women are not worried about that.

Frequently, patients are brought to the hospital, especially from the rural districts, well plastered with mud. Sometimes it is plain and undiluted, at other times it is mixed with soot or more objectionable matter. The patient may have an abscess, a stab wound, or an ulcer. He may have been gored by a cow or buffalo, or may have a broken bone—anything and everything is treated with a mud plaster.

Stoves are also made of mud. A cube, the size of which varies with the owner's wealth, with two holes at right angles and an iron grate at the junction of the holes, does very well. I have seen excellent cakes baked on just such a stove. The cook put the batter in a covered dekshi (a handleless sauce pan) and covered it, top, bottom and sides, with wet mud and put it on top of the fire. When he considered it nearly done, he removed it from the fire and put it in the under hole so that it stood beneath the grate. Thus he browned

A mud village in the Punjab

The potter's trade flourishes in India.

the top. When he finally peeled off the mud and turned out the cake, it was fit to place before a king!

Sometimes the cook has a small portable oven. When he wants it particularly hot, he places it over the fire and seals it to the stove with wet mud. Since the stove itself is of mud there is no need to call in an iron worker when it needs repairs. If there is a crack or the fire pot gets too large, the cook merely remedies the situation with some wet mud. He seems rather fussy about kneading it a certain way—but in the end the cost is only a pair of dirty hands that can be cleaned—with mud!

From a particular type of mud the Indians make cups and tiny plates, a little larger than a butter chip. They are rusty-red in color, like our flower pots. Tea vendors in railway stations sell their refreshing drink in these cups, and when the purchaser has finished his tea, he drops the handleless cup wherever he happens to be. You see the broken chips all over the stations, for the people consume countless cups of tea each day.

The tiny plates are used by the curry merchant—or at least by those who do not use a large leaf, folded into a plate shape and fastened with a thorn or two. Like the cups, the earthen plates are used only once. And do not think the serving of curry is meagre—it is plentiful. To eat more one would need an asbestos lining!

From the same variety of red mud, Indian potters make sarhais—vessels for holding water. It is surprising how cool a good sarhai will keep the water. These pots must be replaced fairly often, but two or three annas will buy a new one.

Houses made of mud are the biggest earthen project in India. Usually they have only one or two rooms, but I have been in one that had six. It was neat and attractive. The inside walls and ceilings were white washed and spotless. In one room there was a wide shelf which held an array of brass dishes, shining after their mud bath. The floors were of mud, hard and smooth. There were enough windows in this house, and consequently adequate light, an asset one does not always find in mud houses.

Sometimes the outside walls are white or colored, but it is remarkable how respectable they look even when mud colored. They stand up well under the rains, even the torrential, monsoon downpours. And if the roof does leak —well, a little mud will repair it! In the hospital a patient sometimes gives her reason for asking to be discharged—"My house is washing away." Of course that can happen—but it is really quite unlikely.

From our rocky ridge in Murree we look down hundreds of feet into a valley in which there must be about a hundred of these mud houses, each one in a beautiful setting of terraced rice fields, corn fields, and rich, flourishing farm land. Thanks to the monsoon, these terraces are rapidly turning green, but from our height they look like ripples left in the sand by the receding tide.

At night the evening meal is prepared outside, and the cook fires in that beautiful valley appear like tiny fireflies. In the brilliant moon light the thousands of pine trees on the encircling slopes are clearly etched—and those tiny mud houses seem no bigger than match boxes carved out of—milk chocolate!

At Home and Abroad

At Home

ATLANTA

On the Feast of Christ the King, the Catholic Colored Clinic in Atlanta, Georgia, celebrated its second birthday. The statistics show about 230 operations performed at the Clinic, and over 5,000 persons registered as patients.

SANTA FE

From Santa Fe Sister Gemma writes that she is keeping very, very busy at the Catholic Clinic there. One of the annual Christmas features is the party given by our Sisters for the children who attend the Clinic during the year. The party grows bigger and better year by year—as Sister tells us,

"At the present moment I am trying to get together some money for the annual Christmas party for the children who come to the Clinic. Last year I had over two hundred attending—and we expect ever so many more this year! The children are already asking about it. These poor children—in many cases the gift we give them is the only one they receive. It takes a great deal of effort—but we are so happy to be able to do this little bit for them—and then, the people are always so generous in helping us . . . "

India

RAWALPINDI

Another Christmas

We draw nearer in spirit to Bethlehem this Christmas through the vivid Holy Night picture our Sisters in India have drawn for us of Christmas 1945 in Rawalpindi—not too far from the Bethlehem of old.

"This is just about the time for your Midnight Mass. Ours is over twelve hours ago. It was a beautiful night with a clear half moon and bright stars. The church bells summoned the native congregation to a spacious church on the hospital compound. The Indians poured in and seated themselves on the floor on low kneelers, the men to the right, the women to the left, including many mothers with their little ones. The congregation made up of our Sisters, the native Sisters, lay nurses, the native Christians, and even one Sikh, one Mohammedan, and one Hindu student, stayed through all three Masses. The first Mass was Gregorian; during the other two Masses the Sisters sang Urdu and Punjabi carols.

"All the people had on their best. Some of the men were wrapped in blankets; some had towels around their necks and mufflers; others had military coats; and many were very lightly clad. They all looked cold—the temperature was 40 degrees F. One Indian man and one boy actually had electric torches, and another boy carried a hockey stick as a staff. The women were dressed in all colors of the rainbow; a few had the embroidered Punjabi chaddars.

"There was another Mass in the church at nine A. M. The Sisters sang carols in six different languages: Urdu, Punjabi, Hindu, English, German and Latin. We could have added more languages—Hungarian, Dutch, French , Bengali, Malalayam, so international is our house."

Beggars All

News from Rawalpindi also tells of our Medical Mission beggars, begging for that 300 bed hospital. The cornerstone is there but not the money! In the meantime Sister Alma Julia tells us that she has joined the Indian beggars to secure the needed funds. She says, "If the hospital were completed, we could keep it filled with patients. At present we are turning away more patients than we are accepting." Hence Sister goes begging.

"The Indians who have the money are non-Christians, so I have to see Sikhs, Hindus and Mussulmans. Our largest single donation was from a Sikh lady, or rather from her husband in memory of their thirtieth wedding anniversary. A donation is never refused, but that does not mean you will get the donation, unless I go back often enough. When I say 'Thank you,' this is often the reply, 'O, you must not thank me. I should thank you for asking me. Unless a man gives in charity he will not be happy in the next life.'

"I have learned many things about the Indians. I can now tell a Sikh, a Hindu, or different kinds of Mussalmans from their headdresses. I know how to address in polite fashion a Hindu or Sikh, or even a Yogi-sahib. Items of information or gossip are passed on to me in my travels, showing what interests or shocks.

"The military staff have helped us by giving a dance. The Rawalpindi Races are giving us a day, and we have been promised the proceeds of a football match when the rains stop. We still have many lakhs to collect—if we can do it. However, I shall take the advice of the Sikh, who said, 'Your holiness, do not worry, I will see that you get the money when I sell some land.' "

DACCA

From Mitford Hospital in Dacca, Bengal, Sister Margaret Mary sends a report on the recent riots in that part of India. "After the Calcutta riots which started on August 16, Dacca prepared for the worst. The hospital immediately emptied 72 beds, and we fixed up two surgical teams with three chief surgeons and two sets of nurses. The first cases were admitted August 21 at 5:00 A.M., and continued through the day. Curfew began at once so at least the nights were peaceful. By the 23rd things were much quieter, and only a few odd cases came into the hospital. However, on August 25, about forty gun shot cases arrived, and everyone got busy picking out the buckshot.

On September 12, the streets are still deserted, and fear keeps everyone tense. The shops remain closed, and Mohammedans and

Hindus do not mix. There is no mail from anywhere. We are hoping that we can go out to Mass again after the 15th, but the hospital is the safest place at the present time."

MARY GIRI

A Grain of Rice

From the north to the south of India . . . Sister Pauline's letter from Kottayam, Malabar, will bring a prayer from our hearts to the Christ Child Who alone can help. "Our mission here is in the very lower tip of India in a beautiful tropical region for rice, rubber, tea, coffee, cocoanut, pepper and ginger. These past months the whole of nature seems to be turning against the people and famine is fast tightening its deadly grip. An unusually heavy monsoon destroyed people, cattle and crops in the floods, and a strange devastating blight has destroyed cocoanut, banana and pepper trees, so that the food situation is very acute. Daily our gates are crowded with the poor—men, women and children in tattered rags, and suffering from all manner of disease, begging even the water in which we have cooked our rice. Although we have only the bare necessities, we cannot refuse the heart-rending cries as long as we have even a grain of rice."

THE HOLY FATHER'S MISSION INTENTION FOR DECEMBER:

"Frequent public prayers for the Missions."

R. I. P.

Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

Rt. Rev. Victor Day, Helena, Mont.

Rev. Mathew J. Kearns, C.S.C., New Bedford, Mass.

Sister Mary Rosita, Cornwells, Pa.

Mrs. Anna Ulbrich, Luxemburg, Iowa. (Mother of Sister Agnes Marie, S.C.M.M.)

Mr. Mathew Tracy, Conshohocken, Pa.

Mr. Currier, Middletown, Conn.

May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.

Your Christmas Gift to the Christ Child and His Mother – will you give it for the Mothers and Children of India?

Many times daily the Holy Family of Bethlehem, in the person of an Indian mother and child, knocks at the doors of Holy Family Hospital in Rawalpindi. It is for them, most of all, that we are trying to build a large, new hospital in India.

MOTHER ANNA DENGEL, M. D.
Medical Mission Sisters
8400 Pine Road
Fox Chase, Phila. 11, Pa.

Dear Mother Dengel:
Enclosed please find $.....
for Holy Family Hospital in Rawalpindi.
Sincerely,

.....

You would not refuse the Christ Child and His Mother. For their sakes, we beg you to help us now—to provide shelter for the hundreds and thousands of mothers and children who come, full of hope and confidence, to our hospital in Rawalpindi.

Whatever you give, the Child of Bethlehem and His Mother—will accept as given to them.

"To the misguided, to the persecuted,

To those who are in misery or pain,

To those on land who from their path are straying,

To those storm-driven on the trackless main,

To those who are despised, to all the sinners,

To those on watch and praying for the light,

God send a vision of Himself resplendent,

A vision of His peace—His peace, this Holy Night."

—Prayer of the VIRGIN FROM SIERRA'S *"Holy Night"*